

Guidance for Interested parties: Applying for a Review

This guidance describes how to apply for a review of a premises licence or club premises certificate, under the Licensing Act 2003. It also contains information about the hearings process that follows.

An “interested party” may apply for a review of a licence or certificate that is in force. The Licensing Authority may reject the application for review if it is satisfied that the grounds for review are not relevant to one or more of the licensing objectives:

- The prevention of crime and disorder;
- Public safety;
- The prevention of public nuisance; and
- The protection of children from harm

The Licensing Authority can reject any ground for review if it considers it to be “frivolous”, “vexatious” or “repetitious”.

What does “frivolous” and “vexatious” mean?

“Frivolous” or “vexatious” will bear their ordinary meaning. Whether representations are frivolous or vexatious will be for the licensing authority to determine. For example, the licensing authority might find the representations were vexatious if they arise because of disputes between rival businesses or frivolous if they clearly lacked seriousness.

What does “repetitious” mean?

A “repetitious” representation is one that is identical or substantially similar to:

- *A ground for review in an earlier application, which has already been determined (the licensing authority’s “register of licences” will include all applications for reviews made to them in the past)*
- *Representations considered by the licensing authority when the premises licence was first granted*
- *Representations made when the application for the premises licence was first made and were excluded because of the prior issue of a provisional statement*
- *In addition to the above grounds, a reasonable interval has not elapsed since any earlier review or the grant of the licence*

The review process is not intended to be used simply as a second bite of the cherry following the failure of representations to persuade the licensing authority on earlier occasions. It is for licensing authorities themselves to judge what should be regarded as a “reasonable interval” in these circumstances. However, the Secretary of State (in her Guidance to Licensing Authorities) suggests that more than one review from an interested party should not be permitted within a period of twelve months on similar grounds, save in compelling circumstances (e.g. where new problems have arisen) or where it arises following a closure order.

Interested parties cannot apply for a review anonymously, even if somebody else (e.g. a local MP or councillor) is applying for a review on their behalf. This is because, for example, the Licensing Authority needs to be satisfied that the person who wants the review lives in the vicinity of the premises, and is not being vexatious. Similarly, it is important that the licence holder is also able to respond to an application for a review, for example, if they believe the applicant does not live in the vicinity or could not be affected by the matters claimed. If interested parties are concerned about possible intimidation, they could consider asking the police, or another appropriate responsible authority to apply for a review on their behalf.

Before applying for a review, interested parties should consider whether their concern(s) could be effectively dealt with outside of the formal review process. This could involve, for example:

- talking to the licence or certificate holder to determine whether there are any steps they may be willing to take to rectify the situation
- asking the Licensing Team at the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames to talk to the licensee on your behalf
- asking your local MP or Councillor to speak to the licence or certificate holder on your behalf
- talking to the relevant “responsible authority” (e.g. environmental health (commercial) in relation to noise nuisance, or the police in relation to crime and disorder) to determine whether there is other legislation that could help resolve the issue

The Licensing Authority will normally encourage mediation before embarking directly into the formal review process.

Things you may want to consider when seeking a review:

- it may be helpful to get the backing of other people living, or businesses operating in the vicinity of the premises, or other “responsible authorities”
- ask the licensing officer for the particular premises if other people have made similar complaints about the premises or asked for a review of the premises already
- if you are thinking of raising a petition, it is important to ensure that the Licensing Authority can determine whether all the signatories are within the ‘vicinity’ of the premises. So, including their addresses and indicating clearly what grounds they are all asking for a review would be helpful. It would also help if a spokesperson could volunteer to receive details about the hearings etc. from the licensing authority and may be willing to speak on behalf of the petitioners at the hearing. Each page of a petition must carry the details of the objection (the prayer), the name and address of the petitioners and their signature.
- if you want to ask another person such as an MP or local Councillor to represent you at the review, it is advisable to make such a request in writing so that the individual can demonstrate he or she was asked by you. It will be a matter for the MP or Councillor to decide whether they agree to your request. They are not

obliged to do so, however, most elected representatives are happy to help residents with this sort of issue. There is no requirement for the representative to live in the vicinity of the premises. It should be noted that Councillors who are part of the licensing committee hearing the application will not be able to discuss the application with you outside the formal hearing, so do not approach them to try to do so.

- for individual incidents, try to get as much information as possible about any official response (e.g. – police being called out)
- you may also be able to back up your application with data such as crime statistics. However, it should be noted that conditions attached to licences cannot seek to manage the behaviour of customers once they are beyond the direct management of the licence holder and their staff or agents, but can directly impact on the behaviour of those under the licensee's direction when on the premises or in the immediate vicinity of the premises as they seek to enter or leave.
- if there is general noise nuisance on streets because of licensed premises, you will need to show how it relates to the specific premises.
- it is important to be able to back up your claims. You could do this by keeping a diary over a period of time, for example. Sound or video recordings may also be helpful. It may also be a while before any hearing, so it is good to keep a clear record.
- residents or businesses applying for a review following a particular incident should be cautious, as a licensee may argue that this was a one off problem that can be rectified without a review.
- have a good idea how you'd like the situation to be resolved.

Applying for a Review

An application for the review of a premises licence or club premises certificate must be given in writing and be on the prescribed application form, which is available to print or download from the DCMS website at www.culture.gov.uk

The form is also be available on request from the Licensing Team at 7B Parkshot Richmond Surrey TW9 2RT. The Licensing Team can be contacted on 020 8831 6455 or by e-mail at licensing@richmond.gov.uk Further information and a link to the review application form is available on the Council's web site at www.richmond.gov.uk

Filling in the form

In the opening statement you should give the name of the person applying for the review – e.g. 'John Smith'. You should also indicate whether you are applying for the review of a "premises licence" or "club premises certificate" by deleting, as applicable.

PART 1 – Premises or club premises details

This section asks for the address and some other details of the premises concerned in the review. If the premise has no postal address, for example an open space/playing field you should describe the location of the premises or give the Ordnance Survey map reference.

You are also asked to give the name and number of the premises licence holder or club. This information should be available on the “Summary” of the licence or certificate, which should be displayed at the premises, concerned in the review, or may be available on request from the Licensing Team at the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames.

PART 2 – Applicant details

This section asks you to indicate in what capacity you are applying for a review. As an “interested party” you must be able to tick at least one of the boxes under (1), then complete section (A) – Details of individual applicant, and if applicable, section (B) – Details of other applicant (e.g. – another resident).

An application for a review of a licence or certificate must be about the effect the licence is having on at least one of the four licensing objectives (see above). You should indicate which licensing objective(s) the review application relates to.

You should state the ground(s) for review, and provide as much information as possible to support the application. You may use extra sheets of paper if necessary. Details may include, for example, dates that problems occurred and how the problem affected you.

You should state whether you have made an application for a review relating to this premises before, and give details of any representations you have made previously relating to this premises. This information will be used to determine whether the application for a review is “repetitious” (see above).

Checklist and declaration

The person or body requesting the review **must notify** the holder of the premises licence or club premises certificate and **each “responsible authority”** of their request, by sending them a copy of the application, together with any accompanying documents, on the same day as the application is given to the licensing authority. Responsible authorities can then, if they wish, join or back up your application for review, or use the opportunity to make their own application for a review on different grounds. The Licensing Authority also has to advertise the review to enable other “interested parties” to join it.

Responsible authorities include the following, for the area in which the premises are situated:

- The chief officer of police
- The fire authority
- The health and safety authority
- The local planning authority

- The environmental health authority
- The body recognised as being responsible for protection of children from harm
- Inspectors of Weights and Measures (trading standards officers)
- And – In respect of vessels only - i) The Environment Agency; ii) The British Waterways Board; iii) The Maritime and Coastguard Agency and if different from these, iv) the relevant navigation authority / authorities for the place(s) where the vessel is usually moored or berthed or any waters where it is proposed to be navigated at a time when it is used for licensable activities.

Details of the responsible authorities are as follows:

**Chief Officer of Police
Twickenham Police Station
41 London Road
Twickenham
Middlesex
TW1 3SY**

**London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority
90 Old Town
Croydon
Surrey
CR0 1AR**

**The Planning Authority
Development Control Manager
Planning (Development Control)
2nd Floor Civic Centre
44 York Street
Twickenham
Middlesex
TW1 3BZ**

**Child Protection Manager
Social Services
42 York Street
Twickenham
TW1 3BW**

**Trading Standards
Head of Trading Standards
Consumer Protection
7B Parkshot
Richmond
Surrey TW9 2RT**

**Head of Environment Health Commercial
Consumer Protection
7B Parkshot
Richmond
Surrey
TW9 2RT**

For review applications about Council premises, funfairs and manufacturing industry a copy must be submitted to the following address and **NOT** to the Head of Environmental Health Commercial above: -

**Health and Safety Executive
London Division
Rose Court
2 Southwark Bridge
London
SE1 9HS**

Signatures

The application form must be signed. An applicant's agent (for example a solicitor) may sign the form on their behalf, provided they have authority to do so. Where there is more than one applicant both applicants or their respective agents, must sign the form.

What happens after a request for a review has been made?

The licensing authority must advertise requests for a review of a licence or certificate. They will do this by displaying a notice at or near the premises that is subject to the review, and at the licensing authority offices, for 28 consecutive days starting the day after the day on which the application is given to them. The licensing authority may also advertise the review on their website. Other interested parties and responsible authorities then have this period of 28 consecutive days, starting the day after the day on which the application was given to the licensing authority to make representations about the premises under review.

If the request for a review is not rejected then the licensing authority must hold a hearing at the licensing authority to consider the application, unless all parties agree that this is unnecessary. For example, the licensing authority may offer to try to resolve matters via a negotiated agreement outside a formal hearing. You will need to decide if this is appropriate for you but you can, of course, insist upon the hearing.

The licensing authority will write to you with the date and time of the hearing and will inform you of the procedure to be followed at the hearing.

As the person or body requesting the review, you are required to give notice to the licensing authority at least 5 working days before the start of the hearing, stating:

- whether you will attend the hearing in person
- whether you will be represented by someone else (e.g. councillor / MP / lawyer)

- whether you think that a hearing is unnecessary (if, for example they have come to an agreement before the formal hearing)
- any request for another person to attend the hearing, including how they may be able to assist the authority in relation to the application

You must let the licensing authority know as soon as possible (by written notice no later than 24 hours before the start of a hearing, or orally at the hearing) if you want to withdraw your application.

Hearings

Hearings will generally be held in public, unless the licensing authority decides it is in the public interest to hold all, or part of the hearing in private. The licensing authority shall ensure that a record is taken of the hearing.

Hearings will normally take the form of a discussion and will be led by the licensing authority, which will consist of three local authority elected councillors (this will be a licensing sub-committee drawn from a full licensing committee of 15 councillors). The licensing authority will explain the procedure to be followed. It will determine any request for additional persons to appear at the hearing. It will consider evidence produced in support before the hearing and can consider evidence produced by a party at the hearing, but only if all parties agree. Further evidence can also be produced if this was sought for clarification of an issue by the licensing authority before the hearing. Cross-examination of another party during a hearing is not allowed, unless the licensing authority thinks it necessary. The parties are entitled to address the sub-committee and will be allowed equal time and, if they have been given permission by the sub-committee to do so, they will be given equal time to ask any questions of any other party. The sub-committee will disregard any information it considers to be irrelevant.

It is important that you consider what you are going to say at the hearing, as the licence or certificate holder and the sub-committee will have seen your application for review, and may get the chance to question what you are saying.

NB - A hearing can still go ahead in the absence of any party (e.g. - applicant or interested party)

What happens after a hearing?

If no decision is made at the hearing, the sub-committee has a maximum of 5 days from the day or the last day of the hearing to come to a decision. Following a review, a licensing authority may:

- decide that no action is necessary to promote the licensing objectives
- modify or add conditions to the licence
- exclude a licensable activity from the licence
- remove the designated premises supervisor
- suspend the licence for a period (not exceeding 3 months)
- revoke the licence

The Licensing Team can be contacted during normal office hours by telephone on 020 8831 6455. You can send a fax message to the Licensing Team on 020 8891 7451 or e-mail us at licensing@richmond.gov.uk